

Roads, streets and routes

Little Walden Road is the B1052 road connecting Saffron Walden to Linton, via the villages of Little Walden and Hadstock. Outside Saffron Walden, the B1052 is largely winding and rural to Linton but it connects Saffron Walden to the A1307 and onwards to the A11/A14 and to Haverhill and Cambridge. The B1052 must have been key in servicing the US airbase at Bowers Lane/Farm, during WW2, and continues to provide access for the transport companies located at the old airbase. In servicing this route and the housing developments to the west of the road, there is a significant north-south flow of traffic on Little Walden Road. While the service roads on the west side of Little Walden Road provide off-road parking for residents, parking on southern end of Little Walden Road, by visitors and residents on both sides of the road, can cause congestion.

There are four road junctions where housing estates feed into the east side of Little Walden Road: Limefields, Lambert Cross, Byrds Farm Lane and Goddards Way (see pictures above). Three of these have mini-roundabouts.

The pavement on the east side of Little Walden Road is discontinuous. Most pedestrian traffic is on the continuous pavement on the west side of the road. There are 'crossing points' with bollards to facilitate access to some side roads on the east side of Little Walden Road.

There is a pedestrian crossing close to the junction with Goddards Way and a manned school crossing at the southern end of Little Walden Road where it meets Castle Street.

The roads of the Limefields/St Mary's View/Crocus Fields housing development are narrow and curving, typical of late C20th housing developments.

Rookes is a narrow lane (previous farm track?) with the houses difficult to see from Little Walden Road.

Catons Lane follows an old track which once serviced outlying farms. It provides vehicular access to Bridge End Gardens, the American Playing Fields (cricket pitch, associated sports fields, play ground and basketball court), and to Saffron Walden Town Football Club's (SWTFC) ground.

Catons Lane provides access to the footpath to Westleys Farm and onwards to Springwells and the Chesterfords, the footpaths/walks around the cricket ground, the American Playing Fields and Bridge End gardens which feed through to Castle Street and Bridge Street.

There is a new housing development and road, Lime Avenue, between the local authority housing on Little Walden Road and The Slade, and adjacent to Catons Lane.



Birds Farm Lane, which joins the east side of Little Walden Road, feeds into a footpath through the housing developments and onwards to Birds Farm and Little Walden, with branching paths providing circuits back to Saffron Walden or onwards to Hadstock and Ashdon.

The pavement on the west side of Little Walden Road continues northwards past the town limits; to the footpath linking Westleys Farm and Birds Farm and connecting footpaths and circular walks.

Urban alleyways or pedestrian pathways are limited. There are small paths connecting Catons Lane to The Green and from Crocus Fields to Little Walden Road.

Spaces

A characteristic of the area is the grass verges, mature hedges and trees bordering Little Walden Road. These are by design, due to the layout of the housing particularly on the west side of the road, or from growth of hedges and trees in and around gardens. Rows of housing on the west side of Little Walden road are separated from Little Walden Road by grass verges and/or a hedge and a service roads, enabling off-road parking and reducing congestion. The Green, with its local authority flats on three sides, provides a particularly attractive open space.



The grassy/bushy area adjacent to Limefields Chalk Quarry nature reserve provides a local area for dog walking and the nature reserve, although not open to the public, gives open space and a backdrop to the housing development.

There are two sets of allotments which can be accessed from Little Walden Road (i) on the west side of Little Walden Road with extensive views to the Slade and farmland and copses to the west. (ii) on the east side of Crocus Fields, on the edge of Birds Farm. As well as the recreational/community benefits of allotments these enable open outlooks to adjacent countryside.



Catons Lane provides access to the open spaces of Bridge End Gardens, the American Playing Fields, associated sports fields/play ground/basketball court, and to Saffron Walden Town Football Club's (SWTFC) ground. Catons Lane also provides views towards countryside to the west and north as well as access to the footpaths towards the Chesterfords and the footpaths/walks around the American Playing Fields and Bridge End gardens.



Catons Lane carpark (currently free but with plans to introduce charging), with the 'free' parking on Catons Lane itself, provides an important parking facility for Saffron Walden town centre. SWTFC's ground has its own, limited, parking and the adjacent Catons Lane and Car Park provide additional parking on match days.

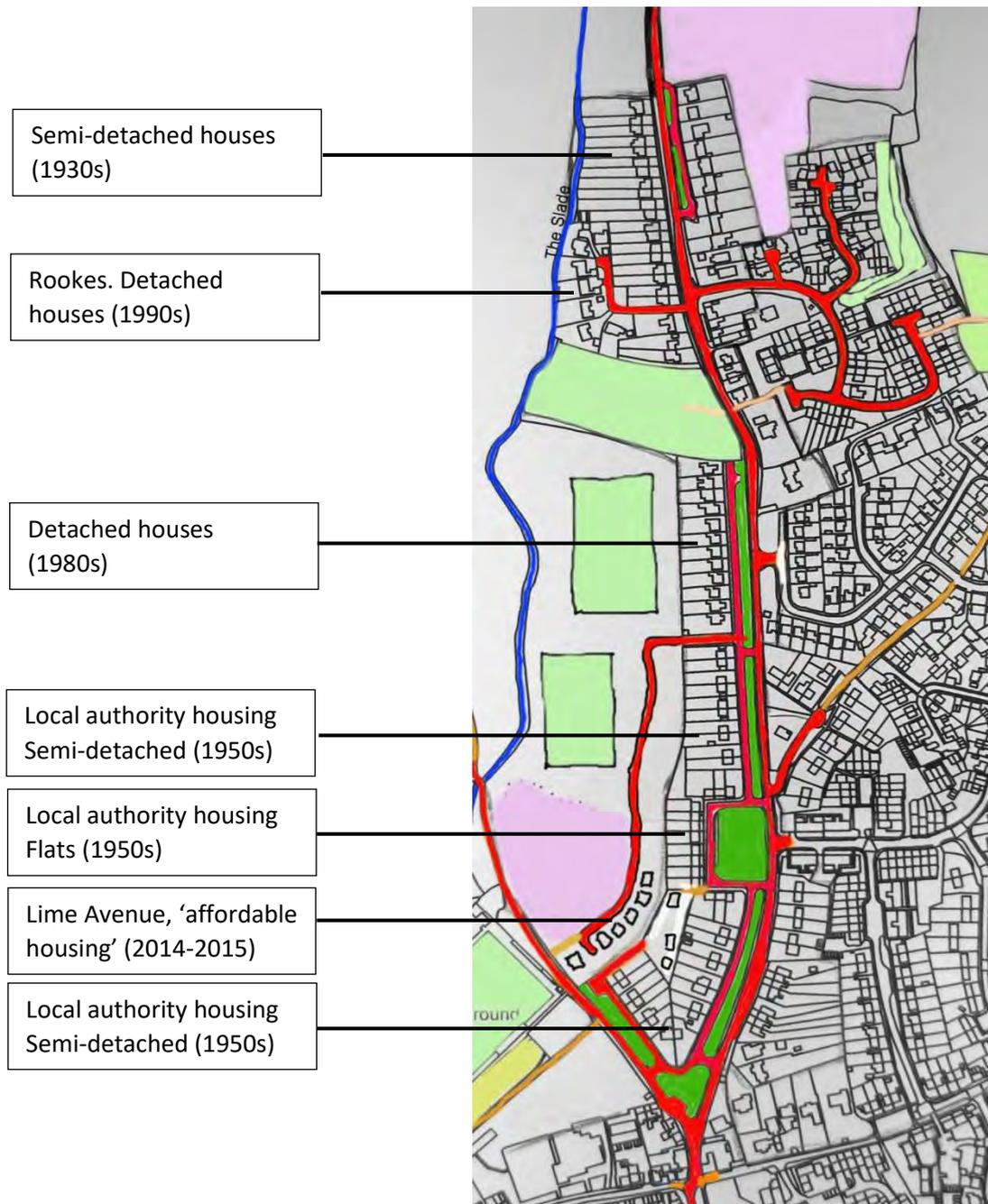


The development adjacent to Lime Avenue includes two sports fields which have been levelled and need further work to bring them up to performance standard. Since the area was converted from farmland and laid out, it has become a popular dog-walking spot for local people. This open space gives views of, and access to, the footpaths and countryside to the west and north of Saffron Walden.



Buildings

West side of Little Walden Road:



- Local authority housing at south end of Little Walden Road and on Catons Lane. These are part of the significant 1950s development, brick-built and generally semi-detached, which also extends up Sheds Lane and adjacent roads. On the west side they are separated from Little Walden Road and Catons Lane by wide grass verges and service roads and, on the east side of Little Walden Road they are set back, with a slope up to the front doors. There was a specific garage area to service these houses but it has been redeveloped as part of the Lime Avenue 'affordable housing' project (see below).



- Part of the local authority development are the flats around The Green, with a distinctive 1950s look and open aspect provided by The Green and the associated views.



- The 'affordable housing' development on Lime Avenue was built in 2014/2015 and comprises semi-detached and terraced housing and a small block of flats. As well as providing much needed affordable housing (see appendix/cutting) the development includes two sports fields which have been levelled and need further work to bring them up to performance standard.



- Just north of the local authority housing, on the west side of Little Walden Road, is a row of 1980s(?) detached houses with a typical style and profile for the era. These are separated from the main road by a service road, grass verge and a hedge, which extends northwards to screen the adjacent allotments.



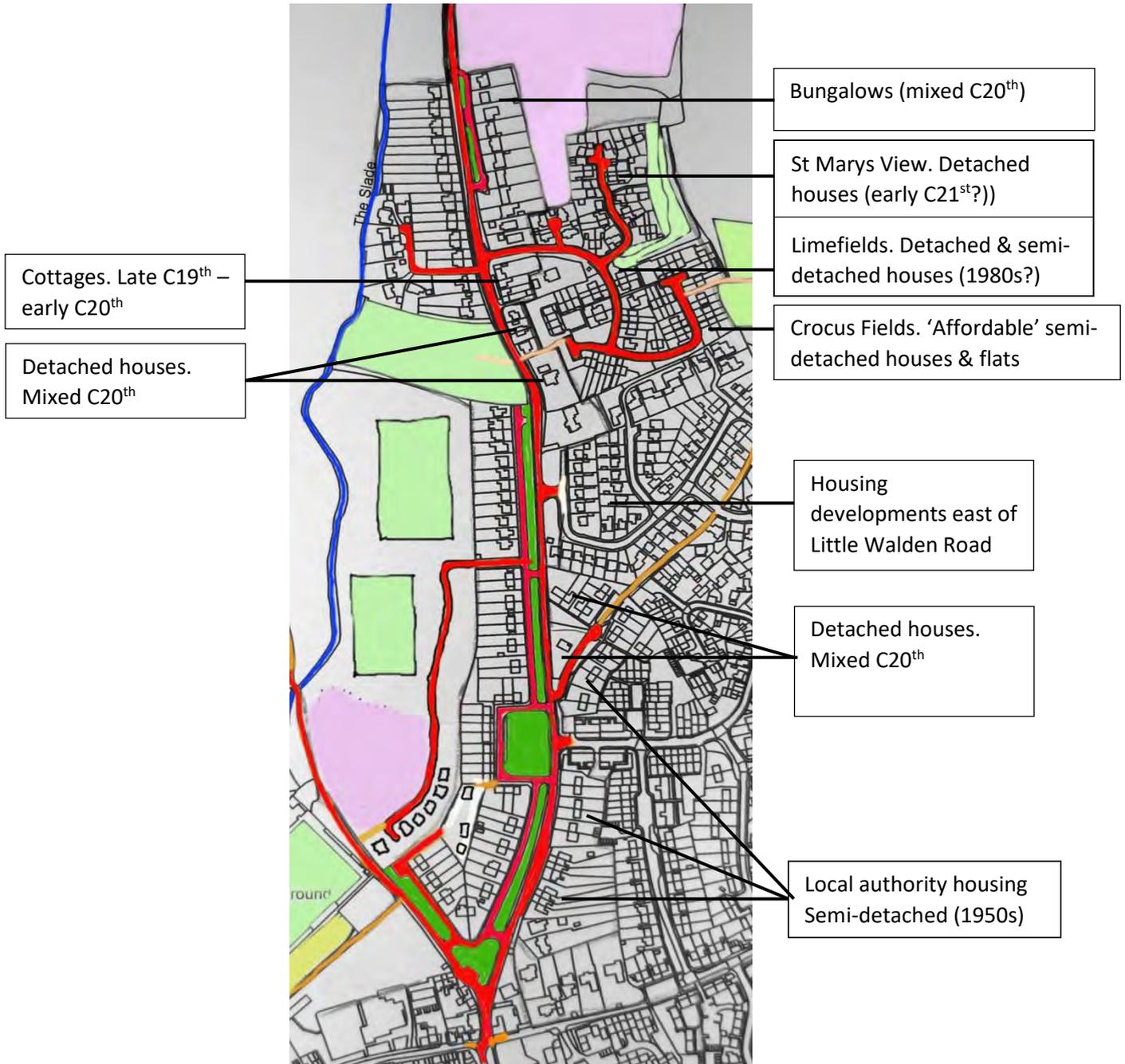
- On the north west side of Little Walden Road., from the allotments to the edge of the town, is a row of 1930s(?) mainly semidetached houses.



- The Rookes is a small cu-de-sac leading to a group of large 1990s(?) detached houses set behind (down-slope, to the west) of the 1930 semi-detached houses on Little Walden Road.



East side of Little Walden Road:



- On the northern edge of Saffron Walden there is a row of C20th bungalows of varying age and design. They are separated from the road by a hedge and verge and have their own 'service road'.



- Southwards on Little Walden Road, is the junction for Limefields, leading to St Marys View and Crocus Fields:

Limefields is a 1980s development of large detached houses transitioning to the semi-detached and flats, 'affordable housing', on Crocus Fields.



St Marys View is a cul-de-sac of early C21st detached houses with some specific architectural features such as flint dressing and varied building line. This development is in the old chalk pit and is flanked by the chalk cliff of the nature reserve.



- On Little Walden Road and adjacent to the junction with Limefields, there is a row of late C19th or early C20th century cottages. They reflect the more rural environment when they were built, with lintels over the windows, doors that open straight on to the road verge and the kitchen (and maybe bathroom) as an 'extension' at the downstairs/rear of the cottages.



- From the cottages southwards to the junction with Goddard Way, the east side of Little Walden Road is dominated by individual C20th detached houses and the edge of the Lambert Cross housing development (covered in character area 8).

The detached houses are varied in age and design reflecting a piecemeal development process. Some of them may merit a listing or registration?



- On the east side of Little Walden Road, from Byrds Farm Lane to Catons Lane, the houses are part of the large 1950s local authority housing development (see above). They are both semi-detached and terraced with brick and rendered facades. On this upslope side of the road the houses are set above the road on grassed verges/banks. There is no room for service roads and some of the frontages have been excavated for parking or residents' vehicles are parked on Little Walden Road.



- The south eastern section of Little Walden Road, to Sheds Lane, has further individual detached houses set above and to the side of an old brick wall and The Pound.



Landmarks

There are limited distinctive features and/or landmarks in the Little Walden Road area.

The location of the area on the edge of Saffron Walden town creates the notable features of views/outlook westwards and northwards to farm and woodland and southwards to Saffron Walden and St Marys Church. The predominance of greenery on the roadside, and The Green in particular, are notable features. The Pound is the sole heritage site but is easily missed as there is no pavement from which to view it.

Green and natural features

The Little Walden Road area forms Saffron Walden's north-western boundary with the surrounding countryside and hence provides views of, and access to, footpaths, farm and woodland. The area is bordered by The Slade stream on the west. This is a chalk stream which is generally dry but can be flow strongly after heavy rainfall. Part of the Lime Avenue development was the creation of 'flood control pits' on the west side of The Slade.

There are a number of grass verges, mature hedges and trees bordering Little Walden Road. Some rows of housing are separated from the Little Walden Road by a grass verge and/or hedge and a service road. The Green, with local authority flats on three sides, provides a distinctive and attractive open space.



Housing developments east side of Little Walden Road are screened by hedges and trees and houses on Little Walden Road often have mature gardens with hedges and trees.



Limefields Chalk Quarry nature reserve borders St Mary's View and, although not open to the public, provides a 'natural' border to the housing development.



There are two sets of allotments which can be accessed from Little Walden Road (i) on the west side of Little Walden Road with extensive views to the Slade and farmland and copses to the west. (ii) on the east side of Crocus Fields; on the edge of Birds Farm (see photos above & below).

Catons Lane provides access to Bridge End Gardens, the American Playing Fields, associated sports fields and to Saffron Walden Town Football Club's (SWTFC) ground.

Catons Lane also provides access to the footpath towards the Chesterfords and the footpaths/walks around the north western edge of Saffron Walden.



Little Walden Road, as well as providing vehicular access northwards to Little Walden, has a pavement linking to rural footpaths and circular walks.

The new (2014-2015) housing development and road, Lime Avenue, includes two sports fields which have been levelled and need further work to bring them up to performance standard. Since the area was converted from farmland and laid out it has become a popular dog-walking spot for local people.



Streetscape

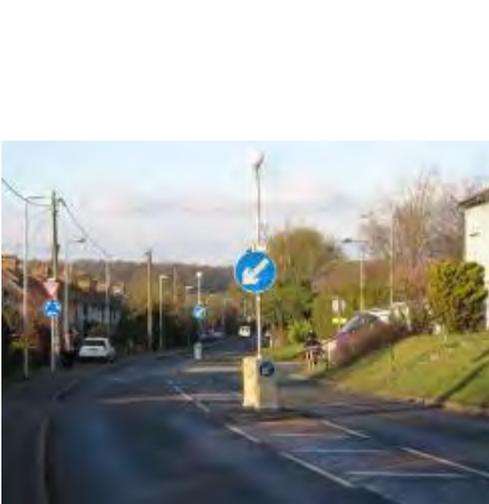
Little Walden Road itself provides a throughway from adjacent housing developments and outlying villages to Saffron Walden centre. The verges and greens associated with the local authority housing have benches to allow a rest on the walk from town but, apart from that, there is no other street furniture. Unfortunately the benches face the road and not the greens.



There is a pedestrian crossing close to the junction with Goddards Way and a manned school crossing at the southern end of Little Walden Road where it meets Castle Street.



The pavement on the east side of Little Walden Road is discontinuous. Most pedestrian traffic is on the continuous pavement on the west side of the road. This necessitates sets of bollards to facilitate crossing Little Walden Road, generally close to the junctions of side-roads on the east side.



Signage is extensive and comprehensive, perhaps due to the relatively recent works to convert the road junctions to min-roundabouts.

Many of the lamp-posts have been upgraded from concrete to metal although there are still a few to complete. Lighting along the Little Walden Road is adequate but is patchy on some of the side roads such as Catons Lane and Lime Avenue.

Most of the housing in the area is of an age for the gardens to be mature and boundaries are well marked with fences and hedges.

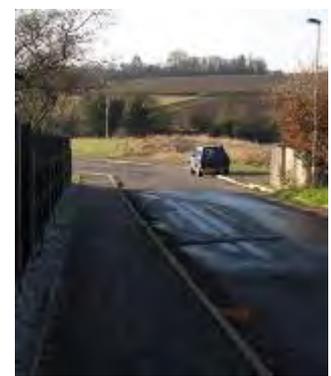
The pavement and road surfaces are generally tarmac and not paved. The condition is generally good.

There is considerable overhead cabling for telephony which would require a considerable project to replace. There is still some overhead electrical cabling serving some older properties at the north end of Little Walden Road.



Views

The planned spaces and the gaps between the houses enable excellent views particularly westwards across The Slade valley to adjoining agricultural fields and copses and southwest towards Bridge End Gardens and St Mary's Church. While the slope of the land to the north of Little Walden Road does not support the same vistas, the semi-rural northern margin of Saffron Walden provides an open outlook. The pavement northbound out of Little Walden Road connects to a network of rural footpaths.



Both sets of allotments provide excellent views, westwards from Little Walden Road and eastwards from Crocus Fields allotments.



There are views southwards towards St Mary's Church and Saffron Walden from locations along the Little Walden Road and from Lime Avenue.



At the north end of Little Walden Road, while the topography does not give the same viewpoints, it is possible to oversee the fields of Westley Farm and Birds Farm.



From the hill on the west side of The Slade, looking east, it is possible to view almost the whole length of Little Walden Road.



Locally important heritage

The Pound is a relic of Saffron Walden's past when the town was responsible for rounding up stray animals. Unfortunately there is no access or pavement from which to view it.



There are some older detached houses and a row of cottages which illustrate the original rural character and early C20th development of Little Walden Road.



SWTFC have been playing at Catons Lane since the club was founded in 1882 and they are the oldest football club in Essex. Saffron Walden Town Football Club is incorporated as a not-for-profit limited company and is a member-owned Community Benefit Society. The club has long-term plans to enhance the pitch and club facilities such that it is can enhance the club's activities and be available for sports and social events of general benefit to Saffron Walden.





Saffron Walden Town Council has two allotment sites; one at Little Walden Road and the other at Crocus Fields (or Byrds Farm Lane). There are 80 plots, 47 at Little Walden Road and 33 at Crocus Fields.



A WW2 trail has been created for the Saffron Walden area and one of the artifacts is located on the green/verge at the south end of Little Walden Road.



Detracting elements

Traffic congestion, particularly at the southern end of Little Walden Road. Parking on the narrower parts creates congestion and this has got noticeably worse during 2015/2016. Large housing developments, similar to those already proposed (and refused), would only exacerbate this congestion.



Summary of key defining characteristics/other observations

Mixed residential development of different periods with substantial grass verges, hedges, bushes and trees.

Attractive views across adjacent countryside and of Saffron Walden church and easy access to footpaths and open countryside.

Sporting facilities at, and adjacent to, Catons Lane and the potential sports fields adjacent to Lime Avenue.

Saffron Walden Town Council's two allotments at Little Walden Road and Crocus Fields.

Opportunities for development or other improvements

Traffic management. Parking restriction/control.

TPO's for some trees?

Completion of the sports fields adjacent to Lime Avenue.

Enhancement of the pitch and facilities at Catons Lane Football ground (SWTFC).

Appendix:

Saffron Walden Local newspaper January 2017

New high-energy council homes in Catons Lane development available for rent to local people

A NEW DEVELOPMENT of affordable rented properties in Catons Lane, Saffron Walden, has been officially unveiled.

The scheme, which includes four two-bed and two one-bed homes built to high-energy efficiency standards, is managed by Uttlesford District Council and let to people with a local connection to the area.

Cllr Julie Redfern, the council's Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "Although it is a small development, it helps to meet the rising demand for more affordable housing in the area.

"Affordability is a big issue across Uttlesford so we are proud and delighted to have been able to complete this scheme.

"It has been a pleasure to hear from some of

the residents how they are benefitting from the development."

Among them are Kieran Levene and his wife Ann, who rent one of the properties. Said Mr Levene: "We can't thank the council enough for this wonderful opportunity – it is a fabulous house. I would like to say a big thank you to everyone concerned with the building of these new homes."

Catons Lane is one of almost 50 new council homes built in recent years by UDC to help meet local need.

Forty-one new sheltered housing dwellings are being built in Newport and the council is looking at further development opportunities being considered across the district.